



STATE COURT ADMINISTRATION

Iowa Judicial Branch Building
1111 East Court Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50319

TODD NUCCIO
State Court Administrator

January 25, 2018

A proposed de-appropriation under SSB 3089 calls for a \$4,835,445 reduction to the Iowa Judicial Branch budget in FY 18. The total amount of the cut recommended for all of Justice System Appropriations is \$7.7 MM. At \$4.8 MM, the Judicial Branch is absorbing 63% of that total. The overall de-appropriation amount being recommended is \$50 MM. As such, the Judicial Branch is being asked to absorb a little more than 9% of the reduction for all of state government. Put in another context, the Judicial Branch only receives 2.5% of the overall state general fund. That means the Judicial Branch portion of the reduction is over 350% larger than the proportion of the funding we receive.

It should also not be forgotten that this would be the second de-appropriation in as many years. The FY 17 de-appropriation for the Judicial Branch was \$3 MM. All totaled, the de-appropriation for this biennium budget would now rise to \$7.8 MM.

Since 96% of the Judicial Branch budget is comprised of personnel costs, options are limited for making cuts. Should the \$4.8 MM cut come to reality, we are left with no other choice than to close courthouses and eliminate personnel branch-wide. As such, we are projecting the elimination of court services at over 30 county courthouses proportionately distributed across our eight judicial districts. The courthouses selected for closure within each judicial district will be determined by caseload volume in each county. The workload of the closed courthouses will then be shifted to other county courthouses in that judicial district. The exact re-distribution will be determined in consultation with court and county officials at the local level. The period of closure will be indefinite.

As always, we will continue to work closely with House and Senate members to place the Judicial Branch in the most favorable position possible. This is just another step in the process. Much can and will likely change between today and when the Legislature arrives at a final number. I will share information as soon as more is known.

Providing equal access to justice for all Iowans is a fundamental principle of the Judicial Branch. We will endeavor to fulfill our commitment to this principle subject to the resource limitations placed upon us.

Sincerely,

Todd Nuccio
State Court Administrator

Amended January 26, 2018